



EASTERN MISSOURI PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL SYSTEM

St. Louis Psychiatric Rehabilitation Center

**POLICY
NUMBER
SLPRC.001**

ASSIGNED REVIEWER CLINICAL EXECUTIVE TEAM	SUBJECT Visitors	
APPROVED BY Curtis L. Trager, SLPRC Chief Operating Officer	ISSUED April 21, 1981	REVISED/EFFECTIVE May 1, 2009

POLICY

Visitation is available each day, including weekends and holidays, so clients may be visited by friends, relatives and others, unless such visits are considered to be clinically contraindicated by the treatment team or are not in keeping with the client’s wishes.

As timely and effective treatment and rehabilitation activities are the primary obligations of clients, visiting is not to conflict with or disrupt a client’s activity schedule, unless specific permission has been obtained from the treatment provider regarding the activity affected.

All programs will have appropriate visiting areas that provide reasonable privacy for clients and their visitors. A public visiting area will be provided for Campus Security clients who are using privileges in Minimum Security. Reasonable privacy is not afforded in that area.

Visitors who come to SLPRC to visit staff shall be escorted at all times when inside the secure perimeter to maintain compliance with the Life Safety Code.

Visiting will occur in a manner consistent with the security and community safety requirements of the facility.

PURPOSE

To allow and encourage friends, relatives, business associates, and others to maintain contact with clients admitted to SLPRC for care. To ensure that services from clergy and lawyers are readily available to SLPRC clients.

To ensure visitors do not interfere with the treatment, rehabilitation and care of clients.

To ensure that safety of the community, visitors, clients and employees is protected.

PROCEDURE

I. Schedule

- A. Visiting hours are established by the facility executive team. Current hours are Monday through Friday, 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, and Saturday, Sunday and holidays, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm.
- B. Additional visiting hours may be arranged through the unit director of each program to accommodate special circumstances.
- C. If a client visit is to occur outside normal visiting hours, the visitor must arrange the visit in advance with the unit director of the client’s program. If a client visitor

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arrives without prior arrangements, a security officer (for minimum security) or the residential area staff (for campus security) informs the charge nurse or nurse manager/designee who will contact the unit director for approval of the one-time change in visitation schedule.

- D. An ongoing change in the visiting hours for a specific client or visitor must be approved by the nurse manager and the unit director of the client's program.

II. General Rules of Visitation at SLPRC

- A. Visits with clients by anyone other than clergy and the client's attorney of record are a privilege, not a right. Clients have a right to reasonable visitation by clergy and their attorney during normal business and/or visiting hours.
- B. A client may not have more than three visitors at one time.
- C. All visitors shall enter the grounds at the Arsenal Street entrance.
 - 1. Visitors to campus cottages may go directly to the cottage after obtaining a pass from security at the information center.
 - 2. Visitors to any residential area and to minimum security must sign in at the security desk and **identify a person** (client or staff member) that they are visiting. A visitor to these areas may not sign in to visit a place (e.g., a cottage, the social recreation room).
 - 3. Visitors to campus security areas of the main administration building, here for business purposes, may sign in at the Switchboard to a **department** (e.g., Volunteer Services; Human Resources; Medical Director's office) if they do not have an appointment with a specific person.
- D. By entering the grounds of SLPRC, visitors agree that their vehicle, bags and person may be searched as per SLPRC policy and state law. Visitors may refuse to be searched, but must immediately leave the grounds of SLPRC without having a visit.
- E. All packages, bags, purses, sacks and containers may be banned from minimum security in compliance with statewide or national security precautions as directed by the Director of the Department of Mental Health, the Governor, or federal agency with appropriate jurisdiction.
- F. Visitors may not bring weapons, legal or illegal, onto the grounds of SLPRC.
- G. Visitors may not provide medication, drugs (legal or illegal) to clients of SLPRC.
- H. Visitors must be appropriately attired. Clothing and other accessories must not be sexually provocative, contain inappropriate images, or otherwise distract from the treatment and rehabilitation goals of the facility.
- I. If a visitor behaves in a manner inconsistent with this policy, including failure to provide full information in the otherwise violates the rules of the facility, the visitor will be asked to leave. Security will be called to escort the visitor from the

grounds. Police may be contacted for assistance as needed. An Incident and Injury Report is completed any time a visitor is asked to leave.

- J. If a visitor provides illegal contraband or otherwise breaks the laws of the State of Missouri, the police will be contacted and the violation reported. If the police do not respond to the facility, Security will be called to escort the visitor from the grounds. Police may again be contacted for assistance as needed. An Incident and Injury Report is completed any time a visitor is reported for law violations.
- K. If a visitor leaves Minimum Security or a Campus Security cottage during a visit, then returns to continue the visit, the second entry shall be treated as a new visit. As such, the visitor must sign out and back in and may be subject to a new search.
- L. All visitors to Minimum Security will use the restrooms in the lobby.
- M. Restriction of Specific Visitors:
 - 1. Specific visitors may be refused admission if they are on the restricted visitors list as developed by the administration and treatment teams, and/or if a client does not want the visitors to visit.
 - 2. Justification will be documented in the medical record if this is not in accordance with the client's wishes. This restriction will be reviewed according to facility policy. Justification can include a finding that the visitor has behaved inappropriately in a prior visit (e.g., sexual behavior, verbal abuse/threats, etc.), has violated the policies of the facility or Department, or is suspected of providing contraband items during prior visits.
 - 3. Unit Directors will notify the Chief of Security/designee of any restricted visitors and this information will be entered into the Pass/Privilege Database, which will be reviewed by Security when visitors present for a visit.
 - 4. A client's wishes to deny visiting will be respected, unless there is a clear and compelling clinical reason for the visit. This reason is to be communicated to the client and documented in the client's record by one of the treatment team members.
 - 5. If the visitor is listed as a restricted visitor on the pass/privilege system database or the client does not wish the visit, the security officer will deny entry. If the visitor desires more information, the security officer refers the visitor to the program director for the client's program.
- N. Visits by Children Under Age 14:
 - 1. Children aged 13 or younger are not allowed to visit clients except by special arrangement. Children brought onto the facility grounds for visitation must be attended by a responsible adult throughout the entire visit. If arrangements cannot be made for the supervision of the children, the responsible adult will be asked to reschedule the visit.

2. Approval for special visits by children must be sought five working days in advance of the visit. Approval must be obtained from the client's treatment team, the Unit Director and COO. The client's treatment team determines arrangement for location and supervision for the visit.
 3. Children under age 14 are not allowed on wards or in cottages. Visits with children under 14 will occur in designated program rooms (not the social recreation area or other common areas of the facility) and are to be directly supervised by staff at all times.
- O. Visits for an individual client may be limited:
1. The client is threatening, abusive or in any manner a danger to self or others.
 2. There is probable cause to believe that the client's visitor(s) have been a source of contraband items.
- P. If visitors arrive when the client is on privileges, efforts will be made by security and ward/cottage staff to locate the client so that the visit can occur in the client's residence area. If the client cannot be located immediately (e.g., staff are not available to search for the client), then the visitor will be invited to wait until the client presents for the 30-minute check-in. When the client is located or checks in, the client will be returned to the residential area for the visit.
- Q. If visitors arrive during a scheduled treatment activity, including meals, they are to be informed by direct care staff when the client will be available.
1. The visitor may be directed to the visitors' room where they may comfortably await the client's return, if the client is scheduled to return within one hour. Otherwise, the visitor will need to leave the facility and return for a visit at another time.
 2. A client will not be excused from the treatment activity, unless specific permission is obtained in advance from the clinician providing the treatment.
- R. If a visitor brings clothing, appliances or other items for the client to keep, a receipt is completed and the articles are recorded on the client's list. Clothing and other items removed by visitors are deleted from the client's list and noted on a receipt signed by the visitor and client.
- S. Any items brought onto the living area for the client's use during visits including food, drinks, etc., shall be inspected by the treatment staff for appropriateness. Programs may require food and drinks to be consumed during the visit, and if not consumed, removed when the visitor leaves.
- T. Suspension of Visitation for a Residential Area or Program
1. Visiting hours for an entire residential area or program may be limited if the Unit Director provides written justification appropriate to the client population served. Approval must be obtained from the COO.

2. Suspension of visitation for the residential area or program is authorized for three days, renewable in three-day increments if the original conditions continue.

III. Visiting Clients in Minimum Security

- A. For visits with clients in minimum security, all visitors must obtain a visitor's badge from a security officer at the security desk at the main entrance of the administration building. Visitors are to provide government issued photo identification.
- B. The security officer will determine if the visitor is listed on the restricted visitor list. If the visitor is listed, visitation will be denied.
- C. The security officer will show the contraband list to the visitor and verbally ask if they have weapons, sharp objects, lighters/matches, cell phones, etc.
- D. The officer will give the visitor the plastic bin to place their belongings/contraband in and have the visitor place in the locker. The officer will lock the locker and give the key to the visitor. The visitor has the option of locking items in their car if they wish.
- E. All items being taken into Minimum Security will be checked by security and must be placed by the visitor into a facility issued brown paper bag supplied by the security officer.
 - If the visitor has any objections to the officer observing this action the visitor will not be allowed to take the item into minimum security. They will have the option of locking it up in a locker until their departure or locking the item up in their car.
- F. Security personnel will search visitors entering minimum security as needed utilizing a metal detector. All visitors must display any detected metal objects or decline the visit.
- G. Visitors sign in and wear numbered visitor badges for the duration of their visit. The badge is worn chest high so it is fully visible to facility staff. Failure to comply will result in termination of the visit. At the conclusion of the visit, visitors return the badges to the security officer and sign out.
- H. When the visitor has been processed, the security officer telephones or radios the residential area staff to send someone to escort the visitor to the residential area or the officer arranges for a security officer or other staff to escort the visitor. Visitor will wait in the main lobby until staff arrives to escort the visitor.
- I. Visitors are escorted to the minimum security residential area by direct care staff. Upon entry, visitors are to sign the visitors' log book, recording their names, addresses, and telephone numbers.
- J. In compliance with the Life Safety Code, all visitors must be escorted and/or supervised at all times while in minimum security.

- K. Once visitors are allowed onto the residence area, direct care staff shall accompany them to the visitors' room.
 - L. If visitors arrive when the client is on privileges, efforts will be made by security and ward/cottage staff to locate the client so that the visit can occur in the client's residence area. If the client cannot be located immediately (e.g., staff are not available to search for the client), then the visitor will be invited to wait until the client presents for the 30-minute check-in. When the client is located or checks in, the client will be returned to the residential area for the visit.
 - M. Visits take place in the visitors' room. Visitors are not allowed in the treatment rooms and may only enter client bedrooms or the communication center with direct staff supervision.
 - N. Residential area staff persons assist visitors off the residential area when the visit is completed or visiting hours have ended and escort them to the Security desk at the main entrance.
- IV. Visiting a Client in Campus Security
- A. Visitors are granted entrance to the cottage living area by direct care staff and asked to name the client they are visiting and the purpose of their visit.
 - B. Each cottage will maintain a list of restricted visitors for that cottage. The list will be kept in the visitor's book in a location not readily visible to visitors.
 - C. If any visitors are restricted or the client does not wish to receive the visit, the visitor is asked to leave and the event documented in the client's record. If any visitor becomes uncooperative or refuses to leave, security is to be called to escort the individual from the grounds.
 - D. When a visitor enters a cottage for a visit, residential area staff persons shall escort the visitor to the visitor room and ensure that the visitors record their names, addresses and telephone numbers in the visitor log book. The visitors' log book should be managed to provide for client confidentiality (e.g., the logbook should have individual pages for each client).
 - E. Visits take place only in common areas of the cottage. Visitors are allowed in client bedrooms only with staff permission and direct supervision. Visitors may not use client bathrooms during the visits, only the staff bathroom.
 - F. At the conclusion of visits or the end of visiting hours, residential area staff escorts the visitors out of the cottage.
- V. Visiting a Campus Security Client in Minimum Security
- A. During routinely scheduled visiting hours, clients who reside in campus security may have visitors in minimum security. These visits will take place only in the social recreation area.

- B. Nursing staff will be assigned to provide escort of visitors to, and supervision of visitors in, the social recreation area. If staff persons are not available due to other obligations visits must take place in the client's residential area.
- C. Visitors shall be screened and allowed into minimum security as described in III. A-G, above. When possible, security shall escort the visitor to the social recreation room. Otherwise, security shall call the social recreation room for staff to escort the visitor.
- D. During visits to the social recreation area, visitors may not go anywhere else within minimum security unless escorted by staff. At the end of visit, the visitor will be escorted back to the security desk

VI. Visiting Staff Persons in Minimum Security

- A. When visitors need to meet with staff persons in minimum security (e.g., former clients coming for therapy, professional consultations, family members meeting with treatment team members, etc.), the visitors must follow similar procedures as persons visiting clients in minimum security.
- B. Visitors present themselves to the security desk in the main building to check in and be searched per the procedures outlined in section III, above. All rules related to the visitor badge, searches, contraband, visitor attire and behavior apply to visitors meeting with staff persons.
- C. Security will call the staff person that the visitor is here to see and the staff person or a designee will respond to the security desk and escort the visitor for the meeting.
- D. The visitor must be escorted by staff throughout the visit and may not go anywhere without staff escort.
- E. At the conclusion of the visit, staff must escort the client to the security desk, ensure that the visitor is signed out and returns the visitor badge.

VII. Visiting Staff Persons in Campus Security

- A. Any person visiting staff in campus security shall present themselves to the switchboard, sign in and obtain a visitor badge, which shall be worn above the waist at all times.
- B. A visitor who is to see only staff of SLPRC (e.g., potential employee here to visit personnel; drug company representative) may go to his/her intended destination in campus security without escort.
- C. Any campus security visitor who needs to enter minimum security must sign in again with the security officer at the security desk and follow the procedures in section VI.